

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 08394 01 OF 02 061652Z

23 45

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 EURE-00

SAJ-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /079 W

----- 015514

P R 061537Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9422

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 8394

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: LOCAL ELECTIONS: NO MAJOR CHANGES EXPECTED

SUMMARY: THE LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN OPENED NOV 30 WITH ONLY A MODEST INCREASE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY. THE EXPECTATION THAT RESULTS WILL SHOW NO MAJOR CHANGE HAS REMOVED MUCH OF THE DRAMA FROM THE CAMPAIGN. THE SOCIALISTS ARE EXPECTED TO HOLD THEIR OWN SUFFICIENTLY TO CLAIM A REAFFIRMATION OF THEIR MANDATE TO GOVERN. THE COMMUNISTS WILL PICK UP MOST OF THE VOTE THEY LOST TO THE FAR LEFT IN JUNE. THE BIGGEST AREA OF UNCERTAINTY IS THE DIVISION OF THE VOTE ON THE RIGHT BETWEEN THE PSD AND THE CDS. END SUMMARY.

1. CAMPAIGN BEGINS WITH A DEAFENING SILENCE: THE LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN BEGAN NOV 30 WITH ONLY A MODEST INCREASE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY. THE LOW-PROFILE CAMPAIGN RESULTS FROM PROHIBITIONS ON NATIONAL CAMPAIGNING AND THE USE OF RADIO OR TELEVISION, AND BY THE SHOESTRING CAMPAIGN BUDGETS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 08394 01 OF 02 061652Z

OF ALL PARTIES EXCEPT THE COMMUNISTS. INTEREST

IN THE DEC 12 ELECTION IS LESSENER BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE CONTEST - SEPARATE ELECTIONS FOR MUNICIPAL CHAMBERS, AND MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLIES, AND PARISH ASSEMBLIES - AND THE DIFFICULTY OF INTERPRETING RESULTS DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF PRECEDENTS.

2. THE PARTIES AND THE CAMPAIGN:

(A) PS: THE SOCIALISTS ACHIEVED THE BEST COVERAGE BY PRESENTING CANDIDATES IN 300 OF THE 304 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER AND MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AND IN 80 PERCENT OF PARISH ELECTIONS. PS FAILURES TO PUT UP CANDIDATES CAME IN THE NORTH AND THE ISLANDS. WHILE REJECTING THE NOTION THAT LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL BE A REFERENDUM ON THE SOARES GOVERNMENT, THE SOCIALISTS HAVE TAKEN FULL ADVANTAGE OF THEIR CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE CAMPAIGN. MARIO SOARES HAS MADE CROWD-PLEASING TRIPS TO LEIRIA, BRAGA, AND OPORTO; THE SOCIALISTS TOOK THE GOVERNMENT TO OPORTO. SOARES HAS ALSO PLAYED HEAVILY ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION, HOSTING VISITS BY THE SPANISH PRIME MINISTER AND THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT ON THE EVE OF THE CAMPAIGN. THE SOCIALISTS HAVE NOT ENGAGED IN THE MASSIVE POSTER-HANGING OR PUBLIC RALLIES OF PREVIOUS CAMPAIGNS. THEY ARE INSTEAD COUNTING ON LOCAL MEETINGS BY THE CANDIDATES THEMSELVES, INCLUDING A FEW GOVERNMENTAL FIGURES, AND THE PARTY'S WELL-ESTABLISHED NATIONAL IMAGE.

(B) PSD: THE IN THE 304 MUNICIPALITIES, THE PSD IS COMPETING IN 265 CHAMBER, AND 266 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE RUNNING IN 82 PERCENT OF PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. FAILURE TO PUT UP CANDIDATES, PRINCIPALLY IN THE ALENTEJO, SHOULD COST THE PSD LESS THAN HALF A PERCENTAGE POINT. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAVE SOUGHT TO TURN THE FOCUS OF THE CAMPAIGN TOWARD LOCAL ISSUES AND LOCAL CANDIDATES. THEY HAVE NOT YET RAISED MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUES, AND ARE COUNTING ON THEIR LOCALLY PROMINENT CANDIDATES TO PULL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 08394 01 OF 02 061652Z

THEM THROUGH. THE PSD PLANS JUST TEN RALLIES; AND HAS PRINTED ONLY 180,000 COPIES OF THEIR CAMPAIGN POSTER.

(C)CDS: THE CENTER DEMOCRATS ARE RUNNING IN 250 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER ELECTIONS AND 203 MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, AND IN 65 PERCENT OF THE PARISHES. CDS DID NOT PRESENT CANDIDATES PRINCIPALLY IN AREAS IN THE ALENTEJO, THE ALGARVE,

AND SEVERAL MUNICIPALITIES IN LISBON. IN THE MUNICIPAL AND PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, THE CDS LACK OF ORGANIZATION COULD COST THEM A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF VOTES. CDS NATIONAL LEADERS, UNLIKE THOSE OF THE PSD, ARE CAMPAIGNING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL FIGURES PROMINENTLY IN THE CDS CAMPAIGN POSTER. THE CDS HAS MOVED AGGRESSIVELY TO BASE ITS CAMPAIGN ON REJECTION OF SOCIALISM AND THE SOARES GOVERNMENT. IN THE CONSERVATIVE ISLANDS AND THE RURAL NORTH, THE CDS HAS MADE MUCH OF THE PSD'S NAME CHANGE TO IDENTIFY THE PSD WITH SOCIALISM.

(D) PEOPLE UNITED: THE COMMUNIST ELECTION FRONT, PEOPLE UNITED (PU), IS COMPETING IN 281 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER AND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, FAILING TO COMPETE PRINCIPALLY IN THE AZORES AND MADEIRA. PU IS RUNNING IN 43 PERCENT OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF GAPS THROUGHOUT THE NORTH, THE CENTER, AND THE ISLANDS.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 08394 02 OF 02 061703Z
23 45
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
SAJ-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /079 W
----- 015682

P R 061537Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9423
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 8394

THE PU HAS DENIED IT IS A PCP PUPPET, AND SOUGHT TO PRESENT THE IMAGE OF A BROAD COALITION OF THE LEFT. TO THIS END, "PEOPLE UNITED" HAS GIVEN WIDE PUBLICITY TO THE INCLUSION OF "INDEPENDENTS" (NON-PCP MEMBERS) AS CANDIDATES. THESE INCLUDE CANDIDATES FROM THE FELLOW-TRAVELLING MDP, THE POPULAR SOCIALIST FRONT (FSP), AND A HANDFUL OF WELL-PUBLICIZED FORMER SOCIALISTS. PU ORGANIZED EARLIEST FOR THE LOCAL ELECTIONS; AND HAS SPENT MORE MONEY BY FAR THAN THE OTHER PARTIES ON A MASSIVE PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN WHICH HAS INCLUDED POSTERS, NATIONAL RALLIES, AND OTHER EVENTS. PU HAS DIRECTED ITS ATTENTION TO LOCAL PROBLEMS AND PROTECTION OF THE WORKING CLASSES WHILE CAREFULLY NOT ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH THE STEPPED-UP PCP ATTACK ON THE GOVERNMENT. PU HOPES TO BENEFIT FROM WORKER DISCONTENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT WHILE AVOIDING OVERT IDENTIFICATION WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 08394 02 OF 02 061703Z

(E) THE FAR LEFT POPULAR UNITY GROUPS (GDUP) WILL PARTICIPATE IN ONLY 74 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER, 63 MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY, AND 484 PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. BESET BY INTERNAL DISSENSION AND LACKING A PARTY MACHINE, THE GDUP FAILURE TO ORGANIZE EFFECTIVELY WILL COST THEM GREATLY IN THE DECEMBER ELECTION. THE GDUP HAVE NO CHANCE TO MATCH THE 16 PERCENT OF FAR LEFT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO. THEY MAY BE LUCKY TO MATCH THE 4 PERCENT FAR LEFT VOTE IN THE APRIL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THE GDUP'S CONSTANT EVOCATION OF THE SPIRIT OF OTELO HAS BEEN HOLLOW WITHOUT HIS PHYSICAL PRESENCE. THE GDUP ARE EMPHASIZING THE FAMILIAR THEMES OF DEFENSE OF WORKER INTERESTS AND AGRARIAN REFORM, OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S AUSTERITY MEASURES, AND RESISTANCE TO THE RESURGENT "FACIST" THREAT.

(F) MINOR PARTIES:

(1) THE MAOIST REORGANIZING MOVEMENT OF THE PROLETARIAT PARTY (MRPP) IS RUNNING IN 51 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER, TEN MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY, AND 111 PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, PRINCIPALLY IN URBAN AREAS. THE MRPP HAS FADED, EVEN BELOW ITS 0.67 PERCENT SHOWING IN THE PARIL ELECTIONS.

(2) THE MAOIST, ANTI-SOVIET MARXIST-LENINIST COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP-M1) IS RUNNING IN 27 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER ELECTIONS AND 15 PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.

(3) THE TROTSKYITE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST LEAGUE (LCI) IS RUNNING IN 14 MUNICIPAL CHAMBER, TWO MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY, AND TWO PARISH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.

(4) THE POPULAR MONARCHIST PARTY IS COMPETING IN EIGHT MUNICIPAL CHAMBER AND TWO MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.

3. PARTY EXPECTATIONS: THE SOARES GOVERNMENT IS CONFIDENT THAT ELECTION RESULTS WILL SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT. THE PSD AND CDS ARE NOT CALLING THE LOCAL ELECTION DECISIVE FOR THE SOARES GOVERNMENT, SINCE THEY EXPECT THE SOCIALISTS TO HOLD THEIR OWN. THEY ARE ALREADY PRESENTING THEIR EXCUSES FOR THE EXPECTED FAILURE TO DEMONSTRATE POPULAR REJECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT -- THE MOST REQUENTLY HEARD ARGUMENT BEING THAT THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE NEVER VOTE AGAINST THE PARTY IN POWER. THE COMMUNISTS EXPECT TO RECOVER MOST OR ALL OF THE GROUND THEY LOST TO THE FAR LEFT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, WHEN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 08394 02 OF 02 061703Z

THE PCP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ACHIEVED ONLY 7 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THE FAR LEFT GDUP HAVE NOT RECOVERED SUFFICIENTLY FROM THEIR DIVISIVE NOVEMBER CONGRESS TO MAKE ANY CONCRETE CLAIMS; AND RECENT GDUP PRONOUNCEMENTS HAVE BEEN DEFENSIVE.

4. CONCLUSION: NOT MUCH CHANGE: THE MOST STRIKING THING ABOUT THE 1975 AND 1976 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WAS THE SIMILARITY OF THE RESULTS. THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE APPEAR TO HAVE MOVED TOWARDS STABLE VOTING PATTERNS AND PARTY PREFERENCES, BASED ON NATIONAL LEADERS, PARTY IMAGE, AND LOCAL PARTY LEADERS. IN THE LOCAL ELECTIONS, THE NATIONAL LEADERS ARE THE SAME; PARTY OPTIONS ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME; AND THE PARTIES' LOCAL LEADERS ARE RUNNING FOR OFFICE. IT IS LIKELY THAT LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS WILL FOLLOW THE PREVIOUS PATTERN OF VOTING. THE SOCIALISTS ARE LIKELY TO FINISH CLOSE TO THE 35 PERCENT THEY ACHIEVED IN APRIL. THE THREE SEPARATE VOTES WILL ALLOW THE SOCIALISTS TO CHOOSE THE STATISTICS WHICH BEST SUPPORT THE CLAIM THAT THE PEOPLE HAVE REAFFIRMED THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE COMMUNISTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO MAKE UP THE GROUND THEY LOST TO THE FAR LEFT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, BUT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL CUT INTO THE SOCIALISTS' SOLID BASE OF SUPPORT. THE VOTERS RECOGNIZED THE COMMUNISTS NOW, WHATEVER NAME THEY USE, AND THIS SHOULD KEEP PEOPLE UNITED FROM ACHIEVING MORE THAN THEIR 15 PERCENT ACHIEVED IN THE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. AMONG THE PARTIES, THE GREATEST UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDS THE COMPARATIVE RESULTS OF THE PSD AND THE CDS. IN THE HOPES OF PICKING UP VOTES ON THE RIGHT AT PSD EXPENSE, THE CDS HAS ADOPTED AN AGGRESSIVE POSTURE TOWARD THE GOVERNMENT. THE PSD WHICH HAS FOCUSED ON LOCAL ISSUES, IS BELATEDLY FOLLOWING SUIT. THE OTHER MAJOR UNKNOWN IS THE ABSTENTION RATE, WHICH HAS INCREASED IN EVERY ELECTION. A SUBSTANTIAL FALLOFF IN THE NUMBER OF VOTERS CASTING BALLOTS BELOW THE 76 PERCENT WHO VOTED IN THE JUNE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION COULD HURT THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AND BENEFIT THE MORE DISCIPLINED COMMUNISTS.

ABSTENTIONS WILL PROBABLY INCREASE BY ANOTHER 5 TO 10
PERCENT. A 65-70 PERCENT TURNOUT WOULD NOT SUBSTANTIALLY
AFFECT ELECTION RESULTS.
CARLUCCI

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LOCAL ELECTIONS, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LISBON08394
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760450-0639
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaacilg.tel
Line Count: 280
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LOCAL ELECTIONS: NO MAJOR CHANGES EXPECTED SUMMARY: THE LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN OPENED NOV 30 WITH ONLY A MODEST INCREASE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY. THE EXPECT
TAGS: PINT, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006